

*How strangely life resounds*

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excerpts translated by Hugh Hazelton

**How strangely life resounds**

as you see it rise, in the midst of the fog  
of the child that you were, just yesterday  
at the table where your father, where your mother  
looked through everyday life, raking  
the earth, pulling out the stray grass  
among the tall tulips  
that still float in the garden like  
pieces of cloth, measuring the winds to come.

And so how strangely life resounds  
behind the tempest that shakes your child's  
body, casting tides of solitude  
upon your dreams, you think, a movement  
of light shines through the fog  
little by little you clear the forest  
of the past, see the path  
where fragile hopes  
are born and slip into the earth.

You suddenly hear the world's pulsation  
already you touch its unexpected beauty.

In your mouth clouds melt  
years of struggle and dark billows  
through which you searched a way  
to the other season

and how strangely dawn resounds  
on the horizon, and how your life resounds.

### **So Many Rivers**

With the labyrinthine thread solidly clutched  
between our fingers, we want  
this thing that is the world to be less strange.

We want the knowledge of the planets  
and of the dreams that walk about  
within our heads, we want Galileo,  
Newton, Einstein and the history of the luminous  
universe within our books  
Miron, Blais, Pilon  
and the garden like a land  
a country where we put down our words  
these islands of love and clouds, we want

Rilke's sea cliffs, Virginia Woolf's  
waves, so many rivers  
of fruits that do not fall  
so many dawns that do not finish

around the table, friendship, poetry  
and angels along the riverbanks  
murmuring long secrets.

We want faces without night  
new eyes to see everything  
beyond the tempests  
boats without moorings  
bridges suspended  
above the chasms, the horizon of a child  
opening his notebook to colour, imagining  
he's captain of a schooner that's taking him  
to the end of the unknown, inventing his adventure  
and the world with him  
becomes a vast poem.

We want to roam  
through history, name the Île-aux-Coudres  
or d'Orléans, the Magdalene Islands  
the length of the Saint Lawrence

we'd like to have words  
for each place, each face

to open our eyes, each morning, joining  
together like a drop of the ocean, like a leaf  
the branch of a tree, to see shadows  
like flames that flicker  
and fade beneath the weight of time

the grasses less fragile  
the swell less strong when the heart turns over.

We want the stars that lean out  
in the middle of great darkness, the earth  
beautiful as a dawn, as the smallest atom  
that inhabits it, we want hope  
to still be possible in our hands, dreams

dreams for a whole lifetime  
and the history of the world  
that we begin again in light, just  
a light without a gash.

We want the road like a breath  
bells for the soul's joy  
the lost storm, the defeat that doesn't weigh down  
and everywhere the horizon where sails grow larger.

We want tempests behind us  
the currents, the nothingness, the now  
and always  
eddies as uncertain  
as shadows that topple over.

We want to come back  
after the repair of things  
and of the heart, to ask  
where we are, where we are going.

We want the rose  
and the rain, the stone and the wind  
that lick regrets  
all of this life in the mouth  
soft as a face, and pure  
as a promise  
that would be the sap  
the vast path.

**We devote our lives to believing**

in something eternal  
among the ephemeral.  
But though the stars reveal the past  
the future discloses nothing.

We devote our lives to pretending  
to trading one mask  
for another, to giving in to expectations  
and answering surveys  
to protecting ourselves from GMOs, from  
electromagnetic and loving waves.

We devote our lives to watching storms  
that we never drink  
to chaining ourselves to illusions  
in order to break free  
to putting an end to lasting conversations  
to loves that want to last  
to changing houses, laptops, to hoping  
not to desire anything more  
to destroying  
what has come before us and then  
idolizing it.

We devote our lives  
to making reservations on planes, trains  
at hotels where we'll never be somewhere else

than within ourselves  
and we search for meaning  
in what doesn't demand much.

We rummage through words  
until a heartbeat  
swallows them all.

We desire something eternal  
and this very desire  
doesn't last.

### Orchestras 3

The day dissolves, slowly the earth grows darker.

Its beautiful sleeping face reveals the sky's geometry  
that draws a few paths for the night.

It's the adventure of the stars, the elusive  
world we carry within us.

Sometimes a cloud comes by to scramble the written form  
and carries off into the darkness  
the perfect figure that has just appeared.

We enter into the instant when life  
seems to be born and die at the same time.

We open our hands, like an incurable flaw  
that we tame, and we remain  
suspended in the branches of evening.

It's the greyness that clasps  
and cradles us at once, a remainder of light  
on the fragile grass.

The dust rises  
like birds that float  
above the river  
like dreams that swirl.

On the swing of tides  
we keep the kites of our hopes high.

Because the sky blows through the leaves of our silences  
and the seasons beat, because  
the dew will soon bring us to early morning  
and the hours slip  
storms and cliffs between our hands

because so many beauties  
go on living and we also are  
so many beauties, every day, we come through  
to the sublime moment when the earth, slowly the earth  
its gentle face awakened, rises from its night  
rises from its night.

**The voyage goes on**

bringing me to the beginning of myself  
and the crossing knows no port.

Vast wings, boats of absence  
a wounded castle. The wind torments  
the forests without memory, pierces the wrecks  
the ruins already rusted by too many winters.

I return by scattered paths  
to the four corners of the night, by crouched  
words in my father's language  
cries, stammerings, fallow  
words that tell no story  
and crunch the fruit and wait for spring.

I have long searched for the threshold  
of my own house, the heavy stones  
of the past blocked the way.

Today I go forward to what I am becoming  
I melt myself, raise myself  
scaffold myself east of my tree  
so that everything begins  
with what is called *living*.

I've understood so many things  
from my happiness and sorrows.

Time burns between my hands  
like yellowed leaves, the imprint  
of each solitude  
that we look at with closed eyes.

And if, behind our steps, the world  
begins to beat again, and  
the never-glimpsed lands  
return like great tides,  
and if I still bear a trace  
it is of hope in a beginning  
that will begin us once more.